

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method of preparing an abutment system, including an abutment having a base portion, for placement on a dental implant, comprising the steps of:
 - a. forming a curable hybrid ceramic material into a shoulder about the base portion of the abutment;
 - b. partially curing the hybrid ceramic material so as to form an initially cured shoulder;
 - c. after partially curing the hybrid ceramic material, shaping the initially cured shoulder to a desired shape so that the shoulder conforms to at least one patient specific criterion; and
 - d. completely curing the shoulder.
2. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of applying an opaque material to the abutment prior to forming the curable hybrid ceramic material into a shoulder about the base portion of the abutment.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of shaping the initially cured shoulder to a desired shape so that the shoulder conforms to at least one patient specific criterion is performed by adding additional hybrid ceramic material to the initially cured shoulder.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of shaping the initially cured shoulder to a desired shape so that the shoulder conforms to at least one patient specific criterion is performed by removing an amount of hybrid ceramic material from the initially cured shoulder.
5. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of shaping the initially cured shoulder to a desired shape so that the shoulder conforms to at least one patient specific criterion is performed by alternatively adding and removing hybrid ceramic material from the initially cured shoulder.
6. The method of claim 1, wherein the hybrid ceramic material comprises at least 85% porcelain.
7. The method of claim 6, wherein the hybrid ceramic material comprises 92% porcelain.
8. The method of claim 1, wherein the hybrid ceramic material further comprises a pigment.
9. The method of claim 1, wherein the partially curing step comprises subjecting the hybrid ceramic material to ultraviolet light.
10. The method of claim 1, wherein the completely curing step comprises subjecting the shoulder to heat.
11. The method of claim 10, wherein the shoulder is subjected to a temperature between about 100 degrees Celsius and about 110 degrees Celsius.
12. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of polishing the shoulder.

13. An abutment system for a dental implant, comprising:
 - a. an abutment having a base portion that is engageable with the implant; and
 - b. a shoulder, disposed about the base portion, that includes a hybrid ceramic material.
14. The abutment system of claim 13, wherein the hybrid ceramic material comprises at least 85% porcelain.
15. The abutment system of claim 14, wherein the hybrid ceramic material comprises 92% porcelain.
16. The abutment system of claim 13, further comprising an opaque applied to at least a portion of an exterior surface of the abutment.

17. A kit containing a plurality of abutment systems including at least a first abutment system and a second abutment system, the first abutment system having a first shoulder conforming to a first patient specific criterion, and the second abutment system having a second shoulder conforming to a second patient specific criterion, the first patient criterion being different from the second patient specific criterion.
18. The kit of claim 17, wherein the first abutment system and the second abutment system further comprise an abutment having a base portion that is engageable with a dental implant.
19. The kit of claim 17, wherein the first shoulder comprises a hybrid ceramic material.
20. The kit of claim 17, wherein the second shoulder comprises a hybrid ceramic material.
21. The kit of claim 19, wherein the hybrid ceramic material comprises at least 85% porcelain.
22. The kit of claim 20, wherein the hybrid ceramic material comprises at least 85% porcelain
23. The kit of claim 21, wherein the hybrid ceramic material comprises 92% porcelain.
24. The kit of claim 22, wherein the hybrid ceramic material comprises 92% porcelain